

REMARKS

Applicants note that only claims 1-21 appear to have been examined. Applicants filed a preliminary amendment on August 21, 2001 adding claims 22-35. In addition, Applicants faxed a copy of the preliminary amendment and stamped postcard to the Examiner on November 19, 2004. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 1-35 are currently pending, wherein claims 1 and 10 have been amended. Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of claims 1-21, and examination of claims 22-35 in view of the remarks present herein below. Applicants further request that the next office action be non-final to allow Applicants a full opportunity to prosecute claims 22-35.

Applicants note with appreciation the indication that claims 3 and 5-7 contain allowable subject matter.

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 1, 2, 4, 8 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,748,293 to Kikuchi (“Kikuchi”). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

In order to support a rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102, the cited reference must teach each and every claimed element. In the present case, claims 1, 2, 4, 8 and 9 are not anticipated by Kikuchi for at least the reason that Kikuchi fails to teach each and every claimed element as discussed below.

Independent claim 1, as amended, defines a flexible printed circuit film that includes, *inter alia*, a body, a first pad provided at one end of the body, a second pad provided at the other end of the body, and at least one force absorbing recess in the body. Nowhere in Kikuchi is there any disclosure of a force absorbing recess. Accordingly, Kikuchi fails to anticipate independent claim 1.

Claims 2, 4, 8 and 9 depend from independent claim 9. Therefore, claims 2, 4, 8 and 9 are patentably distinguishable over Kikuchi for at least those reasons presented above with respect to claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 2, 4, 8 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. §102.

The Examiner also rejects claims 10-21 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,917,158 to Takao (“Takao”). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Independent claim 10, as amended, defines a flexible printed circuit film that includes, *inter alia*, a body having a first portion and a second portion, the first portion intersecting the second portion to form a corner portion, a first pad connected at one end of the first portion, a second pad connected at the end of the second portion, and a first force absorbing recess in the body. Nowhere in Takao is there any disclosure of a force absorbing recess in the body. Accordingly, independent claim 10 is patentably distinguishable over Takao for at least the reason that Takao fails to disclose each and every claimed element.

Claims 11-21 variously depend from independent claim 10. Therefore, claims 11-21 are patentable distinguishable over Takao for at least those reasons presented above with respect to claim 10. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 10-21 under 35 U.S.C. §102.

The application is in a condition for allowance. Notice of same is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner find the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

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Respectfully submitted,

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